

Rag-Weed Rhymes of Rural Folk

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Orlena Marion White



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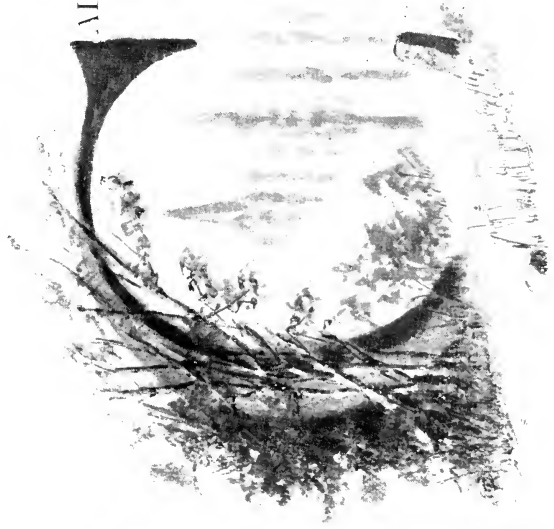
RAG WEED RHYMES
OF RURAL FOLKS

ALM is the voice of the world
today,

From wind and water
never a word.

No sound there is, save the
eyrie call,

At the foot of the hill,
of an earnest bird.



Rag Weed Rhymes of Rural Folks

BY

Orlena Marian Minton



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BY

ORLENA MARIAN MINTON

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RAG WEED RHYMES OF RURAL FOLKS

FLIRTING AT THE BARS

I calmly stand at the pasture bars,
And watch the clouds, as the sun goes down,
Like ships, that drift on the dreamy blue,
O'er the distant spires of the sleepy town.

I am not watching for anything else—
Though there's work to do in the house, I
know—
Of course it is possible John, may pass!
For he drops his work as the sun dips low.

I know that he works in the field to the west,
Where they're sowing wheat for a day or so,
And he'll pass this way if he catches a gleam
Of my poplin dress, in the sunset-glow.

It's likely enough, as I look at the clouds,
That my glance will sweep to the fields below,
Where the sunlight's gold is gilding the green—
He must not learn I am looking, though!

Rag Weed Rhymes

I slipped last night from the stupid house
To languidly lean on the pasture bars,
The moon was up, and the air was soft,
As I stood watching for falling stars.

The fragrance of fennel was in the breeze;
The wind was blowing my wayward hair,
Across the pasture I heard a voice,
Softly humming the latest air.

I knew it was John's when he reached my side,
"Why, dearie!" he queried, "you here so late!
And who are you waiting this time of night?
I was only thinking about you, Kate."

"O, no one especially!" I managed to say.
I looked at the ground, for my eyes can't lie,
"And surely, a moon-eyed maid like me
Can gaze sometimes at a starry sky!"

"O! maybe they can," he jestingly said,
And looked at me with a jealous frown.
"But why are you wearing those flowers in your
hair?
For who, pray tell me, that pretty gown?"

of Rural Folks

“There’s wooers enough in the world,” I teased,
“And hadn’t you heard, that Solomon Brown
Is home from college a week or more,—
And you!” I pouted, “are going to town.”

“Confound that rascally Brown!” he stormed,
“He’s only wanting to flirt with you, Kate,
I want you, Lovey, to give him the slip,
And I think that going to town can wait.”

He pulls my hand from the hardwood post,
And then to the house we both of us go,
I smile as I think that Solomon Brown
Went back to the city—a week ago.

My mamma calls me a gay coquette,
And papa sanctions her with a frown,
But say, is it flirting to stand at the bars,
And watch the stars, and the sun go down?

MEETIN' AT THE RIDGE

Sometimes, when you're kind o' blue,
Things come floatin' back to you.
Yisterday my memory went
Back to where my youth was spent.

Made of time a sort o' bridge
To the meetin' at the Ridge.
Spells when things wus sort o' dull
At the Ridge, but then the hull

Country-side 'ud turn out when
R'vival meetin' had begin.
My the preachin' that we had!
Made a feller feel es bad—

Stirred him up a heap, I vow!
Nothin' equal to it now.
Land! the house was packed one night,
Boys 'ud all been gettin' right.

of Rural Folks

I was stubborn as could be,
Said, I bet they'd not get me!
Old Sam Horned preached that night
All about the gospel light,

And salvation, full and free,
Seemed he's preachin' right at me.
When they called fer jiners, I
Broke right down and 'gin to cry.

Fust I know'd I'd gone and bowed
At the altar, 'fore the crowd.
When they sung the "ninety-nine,"
Seemed no sins was black as mine.

Prayed there with me half the night,
I's converted though all right!
Guess I hain't lived up at all
To the vows I made that fall.

Anyhow, I think that I
'D like to go back there to die,
And be buried close to where
I fust sought th' Lord in prayer.

KETCHIN' FROGS

Namin' things that's good to eat,
Tell you frog legs can't be beat;
Land! they're lushus when they're done
Good and brown. It's lots of fun

Ketchin' frogs, d' ever try
T' catch 'em with a flannel fly?
Fun, to hold it 'bove their head,
Watch 'em jumpin' at the red.

Blamedest thrashin' ever had,
Was the one I got from dad,
Fur the strip, 'at me an' Bert,
Cut from his red under-shirt.

Best way, though's, to wait till night,
Then to shine 'em with a light.
That's the way we used to do—
One can't do it, it takes two.

of Rural Folks

There was Stubbie Evans, he
Liked to ketch 'em good as me.
Never saw two kids as fond
Pokin' 'round an old mud-pond.

Plumb t' pucker, 'twas a lark,
Jest to wait till after dark.
Country-side jist seemed to boom
With the bull-frog's pud-a-room!

'Fore I'd et, as like as not,
Stubbs was waitin' in the lot.
Gosh, an awful time we hed
Get old Jack locked in the shed!

That darn dog dest seemed to know
Some place that he'd ornt't go.
Goodness! never could take him,
Jest go sniffin' round the rim

Of the pond, and mercy sakes!
Every frog 'ud pull his stakes.
When we got there, on the ground,
Gee! the green-backs settin' 'round.

Rag Weed Rhymes

Whoppin' big one from a chunk,
Now and then, 'ud go k'flunk!
Somehow never could agree,
Who 'ud hit 'em, Stubbs er me.

I's the biggest, strange to say,
Stubbs most allus got his way.
He could purty nigh allus tell
All the big uns, and he'd yell,

"Shine 'im, shine 'im with the light!"
I'd wade 'round and blind his sight.
Stubbs 'ud give a powerful lick
With the butt-end of a stick.

Nine times out of every ten
Hit the ground, and they'd jump in!
All the rest 'ud foller too,
Put me in an awful stew.

Water blubberin' all around,
He had made a dredful sound.
Onct we nearly had a fight,
'Cause Stubbs hadn't hit 'im right.

of Rural Folks

Then all them 'ere times is past,
Life is life, they couldn't last.
Where's he now? I guess you'll smile
If I tell you arter while.

His wa'n't such a sorry fate,
Stubbs is guvner uv the State!
Jest the same old Stubby though
He was fifty years ago.

'Never he comes to Poplar Flat,
Looks me up, and has a chat,
Grasps m' hand and asks me when
Me and him can frog agin.

THE BLIND GIRL'S PLEA

O, you in a world of brightness,
Who live in a sphere of light,
Have you ever paused to ponder
On the glorious gift of sight?

If not, O, now thank Heaven,
Just humbly bend a knee,
For I am doomed to darkness,
From birth I could not see.

'They tell me the sky is azure,
That the grass below is green,
But what are green, and azure,
To a girl who has never seen?

They say, that the sky is studded
With twinkling stars at night,
That there is a moon in heaven,
That sheds a silvery light.

of Rural Folks

But what is a star that twinkles,
And what could a moonbeam be?
Well, they would be glimpses of glory
To a girl who could not see!

I have smelled the fragrant flowers,
And felt the gentle breeze,
But I have not seen the blossoms,
Nor the green of growing trees.

You speak of the far, far mountain,
Of the distance of the sea,
Well, the reach of my hand is the greatest,
That the distance holds for me!

O, I know that God in His goodness
Has granted us each a place,
But it's hard to have a mother
And never have seen her face.

To know that there lies about you
A world, of a wondrous hue—
A world that's made for the millions,
But is meaningless to you!

Rag Weed Rhymes

O, I do not ask your pity,
But I do implore your prayers.
Won't you kindly tell our Saviour,
When He calls me from my cares,

To go to that Golden City,
That I only have one plea,
That I want Him to grant me nothing
But the peerless power to see?



TIT-TAT-TOE

I oftimes long for that far day
So many years ago,
When in the schoolhouse by the lane
We played at tit-tat-toe.

Or winter evenings by the hearth,
Within the firelight's glow,
We took our slate, and pencils worn,
From marks of tit-tat-toe.

When you went first, you took an x,
And I, I took an o,
But working on the double plan,
You beat at tit-tat-toe.

Ah! you were only Nellie then,
And I, well, I was Joe,
But in life's game, it's proved the same,
You've won your tit-tat-toe.

And many a game by me was lost,
Just as 'twas years ago,
When want of foresight made me lose
In dear old tit-tat-toe.

DRAPPIN' CORN

Strange the things a feller 'll dream,
Funny too, how real they seem.

Dreamed last night as shore as you're born
I's a boy a-drappin' corn.

Law! it took me back a ways,
Back to them 'ere good old days.

Thought I was a bare-foot lad,
In the furrer follerin' dad.

Drappin' corn grain from a cup,
I could hear him say "git-up!"

Saw old Charlie shake his mane;
Everything jest seemed es plain.

Birds was singin' an' th' crows
Cawin', cawin', goodness knows!

of Rural Folks

Rows wus gettin' long, the heat
Dried the clods, and burned m' feet.

Sweat a-streakin' down m' face,
Made me kind o' slack m' pace.

Goodness me! the times I had!
Never could keep up with dad.

Stops and hollers, "Jim, take heed,
That ye drap some punkin' seed."

Comin' through the thicket dense,
Climb the stake and rider fence,

I saw Jeanie with a jug—
Might' nigh all that she could lug,

Bringin' water frum the well,
Say, my heart begun to swell.

I was thirsty, and I knew
Jeanie 'd come to help me through.

Maw's old apron 'round her tied,
With a pocket on the side.

Rag Weed Rhymes

She would help me all the morn—
Jeanie would—a-drappin' corn.

My! but Jeanie was my friend,
'D stick up for me to the end.

'Bout the time I took a sup
From the jug, why, I woke up.

I was so dissatisfied,
I had dreamed, I almost cried.

Things don't seem the same to me,
Did back there in forty-three.

Kinder seems here in the last
Thirty years, I've lived too fast,

One or more score years ago,
Things, of course, went rather slow,

But you bet your boots, 'twas worth
All the drills they is on earth,

Jest to hear that dinner horn,
And to quit a-drappin' corn!

RING AROUND THE ROSY

Ring around the Rosy,
That's the game for me.
"Mamma's little posy"—
Any one can see.

I should like to sing it,
All the livelong day,
To the little Rosies,
And the flowers of May.

"Isn't she a posy,
Charming little lass,"
All the little crickets
Chirp it in the grass.

"Don't you see we're happy,
Happy as can be?"
Ring around the Rosy
Is the game for me.

BILL BUNDY'S COW

Bill Bundy had a bossy cow,
He bought at Barnum's Zoo,
And Bill delighted, day and night,
To tell what she could do.

The boys at Boonville 'd gather 'round
A box, at Bosley's Barns,
And there enthroned, they'd listen to
Bill Bundy, spinning yarns.

"O, do not try," said Billy once,
"To buy her any more,
For she is worth a thousand times
A whole department store.

"She makes so much of chewing gum,
She chews with all her might,
And has to stay up late at night,
To chew it out of sight."

of Rural Folks

To break her of this habit bad,
Bill said he knew he should,
For Bossy always, day and night,
Was chewing on a cud.

"Now all I tell you, boys," he said,
"Believe it if you please,
But I can prove it by my wife,
She makes our cottage cheese."

He vowed she ate the finest grass,
Because she realized,
That Billy's babies ought to have
Their sweet milk pasteurized.

He added, "Boys, you won't believe
It's so, but I'll be burned,
If all the butter Bossy makes
Is not already churned."

But now I know you'll sorry be,
To hear of Bossy's fate,
In coming from the pasture land,
Once she was rather late,

Rag Weed Rhymes

And in the dark she stepped upon
Her tail of wondrous silk,
Got tangled up, and sad to say,
Fell down, and strained her milk!



THE SQUALL

I went out riding on the lake
With Grandpa Green last Fall,
And heard two people on the boat
A-talking 'bout a squall.

The man with whiskers turned around,
And told the man what's tall,
He guessed "the party lost last night
Was drowned in a squall."

Now, what's a squall, do you suppose?
I'm sure I'd like to know,
For I have never heard a word
That seems to vex me so.

I know quite well when mamma makes
Me play with little Paul,
She says, "Now give him all your things,
And don't you make him squall."

I wonder if she is afraid,
When we are playin' 'round,
He'll shed so many salty tears,
That they will make him drown!

OUR ORCHARD

O, the apple boughs are all abloom,
And the fields are fragrant with perfume.

Each bough with bursting buds is full,
While the ground is white as parded wool.

O, the tinted trees are a happy-band
Of blushing brides, in apple-land.

There are coy coquettes, and ladies tall,
But the gnarled old tree is the queen of all.

With the toss of her head, she starts a tune,
And all keep time to the zephyr's rune.

Then they bend their boughs, and sweep the
ground—
In the swirl of the dance they all swing round.

O, an Orchard-Prince must have come in the night,
And turned our trees to this pretty sight.

of Rural Folks

I stand like a love-sick lad in a trance,
While pearl-pink petals 'round me prance.

I lend myself to a world that's new,
And join myself to the apple-bloom crew.

I give my arm to a gay coquette,
The old world's woes I soon forget,

At the tender touch of her velvet hand—
For love, sweet love, is abroad in the land!



THE OLD LICK POND

Oh, I'd like to fish
In the pond in the glen,
Where the whirlgig beetles
Spin and spin.

When the fields are green,
And the trees beyond,
It's a joy to fish
In the old Lick Pond.

In the waters clear,
Where the cat-fish swim,
When your line is a twine,
And your pole is a limb.

You lie in the grass
All wet with dew,
While the sky, on high,
Is a blissful blue.

of Rural Folks

As the sun climbs up,
You seek the shade
Of the sycamore tree,
Where you wade, and wade,

Or you spread your coat,
And stretch out flat,
And cover your face
With your old straw hat.

O, to lie at length
Till the dinner horn sounds,
When you rub your eyes,
And spring with a bound

To your pole, for the line
Is pulling to the right,
And the old cork bobbin
Is out of sight.

As you give your pole
A sudden yank,
A golden cat
Falls out on the bank.

Rag Weed Rhymes

O, it's sweet to live,
And life is a song,
When you fish for cats
The whole day long,

Till the sun sinks low,
And he dips his brim,
Or spills his gold
In the lake pond's rim.

And the bull-frog's bellow,
Back in the bogs,
And you hear Billie Brown,
As he calls his hogs.

Then you wend your way
By the Indian trail,
While your heart keeps time
To the swing of your pail,

Till you reach your home,
And you raise up the latch,
When everybody yells
"How many did you catch?"

of Rural Folks

Oh, then it's a joy—
That is up to you—
To calmly say,
"Just ninety-two!"



MR. CRICKET

Oh, Mr. Cricket!
Why don't you stop?
When I come near you
You hop, and hop!

I want to catch you,
And doctor your note,
By brushing the rust
From off your froat!

NINETY-TWO

Time has age upon me flung,
I am here, no longer young,
Settin' in the sunlight's glow,
Where the shadders come an' go.

Dreamin' here, without a keer,
Settin' in this old arm-cheer,
Leanin' 'gainst the winder-sill,
Thinkin' some, as ole folks will.

I hain't any use no more,
Most I loved has gone before.
Strange! how life has slipped away,
Youth was here but yesterday.

When at fifty, young was I,
And at sixty I was spry.
E'en at eighty, I was found
Workin' some, and tinkerin' 'round,

But they hain't much left to do,
For a man at ninety-two.
All my senses seem to be
Kinder gettin' way from me.

of Rural Folks

'Pears I don't want no one 'round,
That will stir, er make a sound.
All that's company at all,
'S shadders on the floor, and wall.

From the things that's 'round about,
I am kinder losin' out.
Dreamin'! dreamin'! did I say?
No, but sort o' slippin' 'way.

Some day, 'spect they'll find me here
Cold and dead, in this old cheer.
Annie, thinkin' me asleep,
Closer to my cheer will creep,

Askin' "Hain't you heard the chime?
Father, father, dinner-time!"
I won't stir, nor hear the call,
Jest quit breathin'—that is all.

OUR HIRED GIRL

I wonder why our hired girl
Is different from the rest of us?
I wonder why she ain't allowed
Like sister May, to quarrel and fuss?

Sometimes I get to thinkin' so
My head and brain get in a whirl,
For I can never ravel out,
The way they treat our hired girl!

At dinner time she has to go
Out by the kitchen stove, and wait
Till everybody else is through
Before she gets her dinner plate,

And has to eat there all alone,
On that old table by the wall,
That's always stacked with dirty things,
And ain't got any cloth at all.

of Rural Folks

I had to eat there onct myself,
When mom got mad at me, and said,
An' she heard any more from me,
She guessed she'd put me "straight to bed!"

But then our hired girl is good,
She's just as nice as she can be—
She makes me cooky-boys, and dogs,
When I am mad, and humors me.

It's not because she isn't sweet,
She's just as pretty as a rose,
And every day she looks as neat,
And stylish in her Sunday clothes.

I 'member first day 'at she come,
She set out on the steps and cried,
And I heard mom awondering why
That "Anne" was "so dissatisfied."

To have a maid a-whimperin' 'round
She said just put her "in a stew,"
For she could never 'zactly tell
"Just what a servant girl might do."

Rag Weed Rhymes

One night when all the work was done,
And we's alone, just her and me,
She told me all about her home
Across the sea! across the sea!

Her mother, and a little boy
That ain't no bigger much than me,
A crippled sister, and her paw,
That just as old, as old can be!

It seemed, when she was talking there,
It weren't our hired girl at all,
But somethin' strange I can't explain
Was over all—was over all—

I felt myself, so awful queer,
A-sitting in the twilight gray,
I knew that part of me was gone,
That part of us had slipped away.

I think our spirits must have flown,
Or that the souls of her and me
Had joined each other's hands, and gone
To be with them—across the sea.

of Rural Folks

Sometimes when no one ain't around,
And mamma's lonesome like, w'y, she
And Anne, they talk on common ground,
And they get chummy as can be.

And then I think that, after all,
'At maybe things'll come out right,
And I am always still, and try
To help them out, with all my might.

But 'bout the time I think it's fixed,
For everything to smother run,
Some company comes, and, O, gee whiz!
Things all get back where they begun.

For mom grows cold, and stiffish like,
And Anne must act like she was dumb,
I sometimes wish! and wish! and wish!
'At company 'd never, never come!

In certain ways it's plain enough,
In some respects I quite agree,
In what she "must" and "must not" do,
"Our Anne" is treated some like me.

Rag Weed Rhymes

She has to do the things she hates,
And always must be so polite,
She must get up as early too,
And never stay out late at night.

Of things she likes, she gets but one,
While Sister May and Cousin Sue
Can have a dozen beaus or more,
Well, Annie can't have even two!

When I grow up, I think I'll go
Away from all this awful muss,
Where things is plain, and hired girls
Ain't different from the rest of us!



THE sea gulls,

O the sea gulls,

Low above the waters flying,

In their wild and crazy crying

There are memories poignant,

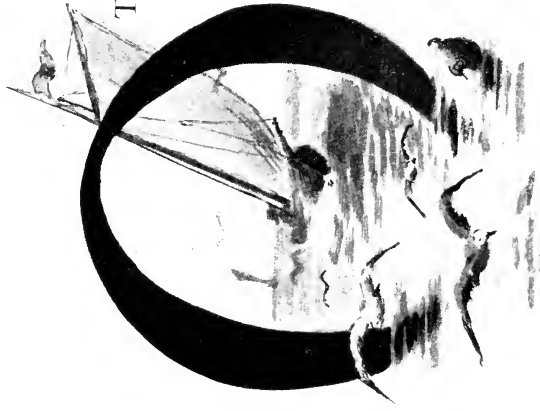
Strangely dear to me.

In a sort of teasing fashion

They are whipping up my passion

For the Sea,

For the Sea!



SCRUBBY AND ME

They's lots o' good things
Down on Cicero Crick,
They's sour-balls, and spicewood,
And slippery-slick

'At you skin from a tree
In a very long string,
An' it stretches out furdern
Real gum does, by jing!

Well, Scrubby and me,
We know quite a few
Good things growin' wild
'At's dandy to chew.

But onct me and Scrubby
Fell out, hully gee!
Over somethin' or 'nother
We couldn't agree.

Rag Weed Rhymes

O, yes, I remember,
'Twas down by the spring,
We wus ketchin' some lizards—
We had a whole string!

An' set down to 'vide 'em,
But Scrubby, well he
Took his'n, and give
The bob-tails to me!

I never knowed Scrubby
Do that way before,
In everything always
I always got more.

All the bird eggs we got
In the old apple tree,
Why, Scrubby 'd give all
Of the prettiest to me.

I was mad as a hornet,
I said, "Do you s'pose
I'll have them old bob-tails,
You old freckled-nose!"

of Rural Folks

He called me "Miss Spitfire,"
And "cry-baby" too,
And then commenced mockin'
By goin' "Boo-hoo!"

"Just keep it up, Snub-nose,"
I said, "an' I'll tell,
'Twas you took the clapper
From the big dinner bell.

"An' I know somethin' else,
I can tell my Aunt Rose,
How you dressed up last Sunday
In grandpa's good clothes!

"An' you tore 'em like sixty!
Gettin' out of 'em too,
She knows you, old mister,
You know what she'll do!"

My! Scrubby looked sneakin',
His face got as red—
It wus jest somethin' awful
The things that he said.

Rag Weed Rhymes

'Twas worse than "dad-blast-it,"
Or "jimony smoke,"
And he said that "some girls"
Never could "take a joke."

Then he took all his lizards,
And give 'em a sling—
They caught on a limb,
What hung over the spring.

I said, "Now, I'll get 'em!"
As he run down the pike,
He turned and yelled back,
"You can't cut the John Ike!"

I got 'em all righty!
An' hung 'em up high
On the sill of the winder,
That evenin', to dry.

Some time, awful late,
I woke up in the night,
Old Tom and a strange cat
Wus havin' a fight.

of Rural Folks

I jumped up next morning,
As soon as 'twas light,
An' would you believe it?
Not a lizard in sight.

But back in the shrubs,
Where the catnip is thick,
Old Tom was just rollin',
And gee! he was sick!

Well, somehow them lizards
Made me kind o' sick,
Just like I'd done somethin'
Or played a mean trick.

Scrubby might 'a' been jokin',
And maybe 'twa'n't fair
For me to take all,
And poor Scrubby no share.

I started off down to
His house, right away,
I didn't know hardly
Just what I would say,

Rag Weed Rhymes

But when I got down by
The chenskapin-tree,
I saw Scrubby comin'
An' Scrubby saw me!

He waved his old hat,
Without any brim,
And I took my bonnet
And waved it at him.

I felt kind o' funny though,
Jest when we met,
An' Scrubby he asked me,
If I was mad yet.

It hurt to say "no,"
But I said 'er, and then
He said he was sorry,
And we made up agin.

We went right a-fishin',
He said, without doubt,
That I could have all
Of the speckledest trout.

of Rural Folks

I don't feel just right,
When Scrubby is mad—
O, I know he's a boy,
And is kind o' bad—

But, say! they hain't nothing
That Scrubby can't do!
O, he can skin cats,
And you bet I can too!

He's good for a boy,
An' now since that time,
All my things is Scrubby's,
An' Scrubby's is mine.



THE STORK

An awful funny bird came down,
One night, and lighted in the fork
Of our big apple tree, but say!
My mamma says he was a stork.

I didn't see him though myself,
I guess he come when I's asleep,
I'm awful sorry 'bout it too,
For my! I'd like to got a peep.

My mamma said he was a bird,
'At's just about as big as me.
It must 'a' hustled him a lot,
To squeeze into that forked tree.

I got fast in there onct myself,
And I was doubled up a lot.
I don't see how he fixed his legs,
And made 'em short enough to squat.

of Rural Folks

But you can never, never guess
The thing he brought and left out there—
It was a little baby boy,
Without a tooth, or speck of hair!

My mamma said she went outdoors,
And found the little shivery thing,
All cuddled in our apple tree,
A-sleepin' just like everything.

That day when I got up she said,
"Come here, my dear! see what I got."
I thought, perhaps, she had some gum,
And candy too, as like as not.

'Ell, when I saw his reddish face,
And squinty eyes, and tiny nose,
There never was another boy
So shocked as I, I don't suppose!

I felt all queery in my breast,
And kind o' sticky in my throat,
I 'gin to snub—I don't know why—
And rub my eyes upon my coat.

My mamma laughed and said, "W'y, dear!"
But I run to Aunt Betty Fogg,
And cuddled close to her, and sobbed
"I fink he looks just like a dog."

He's bigger now, but all the things
That are my wery *ownest* too,
I have to give 'em up to him,
Or he is mad and goes "boo-hoo!"

He treats me awful, pulls my hair,
And bites me too, and chews me up,
But when folks want to buy him, w'y,
I want to keep the little pup!



HIDE AND SEEK

Six or seven times a week,
We all play at "hide and seek."
'Bout the time the day is done,
'S when we have the mostest fun.

All the children on our street,
Out in Bolby's alley meet,
Then the biggest boy will shout,
"We've begun a-countin' out."

Then we all get in a line—
Lots of times there's eight or nine.
Guess the big boys know about
All the ways o' countin' out.

"Entry, pentry, cutery corn,
Apple seeds and apple thorn,"
Or "wire, briar, limber lock,
Three geese in a flock."

Rag Weed Rhymes

Then there's "umpty, dumpty, din,
Thirty pigeons in a pen,"
An' I don't know all the rest—
But the one I like the best

'S "eenie, meenie, miny mo,
Crack a feenie, finie, fo,"
No one ever wants a bit,
Be the one that's counted it.

Lots of times the kids 'll say,
That they ain't "a-goin' t' play."
Then they nearly have a fit,
Just because they're counted it.

One 'at's it must hide his face,
At a place that's called the base,
Lean his head against the wall,
Then begin to count, and call.

Enybody ain't hid, w'y,
He must holler out, "Nay-hi."
If they ain't nobody speaks,
Then the baseman goes and seeks.

of Rural Folks

Lots of fun to reach your place,
When he's gone, and get your base.
Usually we have it fair,
You can hide 'most anywhere.

Once a little bit of snipe
Crawled into a sewer pipe.
Long time after all was found,
Heard him cryin' under ground.

All the big boys 'gin to doubt,
If they'd ever get him out—
I know lots of other games,
Some of them have funny names.

"Tap the rabbit" 's very good,
And the "Children of the Wood."
But I think you all agree,
"Hide and seek's" the game for me!

DANDELIONS

The dandelions that I pick
Along the meadow brook,
I always take 'em, every one,
An' give 'em to the cook.

She always seems so awfu' glad,
An' she yust says, "Why, Emmy Bell,
I'm sure it's wery dear of you,
An' my, how wery sweet they smell!"

Nen I yust keep a-bringin' 'em,
An' hand 'em to her fru the door,
An' she keeps on a-sniffin' 'em,
Nen I go back and get some more!

'Ell, nen she says, "Why, Emmy Bell,
Don't get no more for cook to-day,"
An' nen she gives me cake an' jam,
An' stuff to eat, and 'course I stay.

of Rural Folks

Last evenin' w'en I went outdoors,
W'y, lyin' in the wacant lot,
An' stringin' down the winder-sill,
Was every dandelion I got!

I sat down on the ground, and stayed,
Till I had picked 'em up agin,
An' nen I tied 'em wiv a drass,
An' picked 'em up, and tooked 'em in.

She saw me comin', an' she laughed,
An' held me up, and kissed my face,
An' nen she fanked me "wery much,"
An' said I was a little case!

We fixed 'em in a berry jar,
Wiv water 'at I helped to fill,
An' nen cook put 'em up so high,
I am quite sure 'ey cannot spill!

FINGERING

I like to finger everything,
That's on the table where I go,
And pick them up, and turn them 'round,
I do not want to keep them though.

But mamma, she just acts as scared,
And says to "don't" and says "You know,
I've told you not to touch that vase,
Or gnaw that book, or finger so!"

"I wish you would come here to me,
And on this little chair sit down."
I go, and then she scolds me 'cause
I scrape the chair, and fidget 'round.

I look around me in the room,
So then I ask if I can go
To see a picture on the wall,
'Ell then she says, she *guesses so*.

of Rural Folks

But 'bout the time I fix to touch
The gold fish, in the jardiniere,
She sees me, and she scolds and says,
"Lunellie May, you please come here!

"But straighten out that doilie first,
And *look*, you're skewing up that mat,
Don't wrinkle up your forehead so!
Go in the hall and get your hat!

"I'll take you home where you belong!
You've been a horrid girl to-day,
I'll never take you 'long again
If you behave in such a way."

I don't know just exactly why
I like to finger things so much,
And seems it always is the things
That no one likes for me to touch.

IF EVERY COURSE WAS A DESSERT

I do not see that it would hurt,
If every course was a dessert.
I know 'most any boy would say,
He'd like it better thataway.

I wish that I could make it clear
To mamma, but she says, "O, dear!
You are an awful sweet-toothed boy,
You'll eat your dinner, you'll enjoy

"Your cake and cream a whole lot more,
Than if you ate it up before."
I want to eat it first, you see,
But then she never will agree.

When I get big I think I'll go
Away from here, a mile or so,
Into some nice big restaurant,
Where I can eat just what I want!

of Rural Folks

I think the very first that I
Would order, would be lemon pie,
And then when that was all et up,
I'd get some sherbet in a cup.

And then perhaps the next I'd take
Would be preserves, and half a cake.
Right after that I'd get a tray
Of macaroons, and good frappé.

Of course, I've only just begin,
And lots of more things would come in,
But what's the use to name them o'er,
You only want them all the more.

You see, I want to eat them fast,
But there will be enough to last,
And last of all will be a dream,
Three bricks of different kind of cream!

BUTTER BREAD, WIV SUDAR ON IT

Sometimes w'en I'm out at play,
I get tired, and come, and lay
 By the kitchen door,
W're the sun is shining warm,
An' the little gnats all swarm,
 An' the pigeons soar.

Nen the cook comes wiv a knife
Out, and says, "W'y, 'pon my life
 'Ere is Emmy Bell!
You're as quiet as a mouse,
Come with cook into the house,
 Maybe you're not well."

Nen I get wite up and doe
Wiv her in the house, for O!
 All the fings I smell,
'At she is a-cookin' 'ere,
Makes the tummy feel as bare
 Of her Emmy Bell.

of Rural Folks

Nen I w'isper in her ear,
So 'at no one else can hear,
 'S she unties my bonnet.
An' she says, "What is it, Sweet?"
Nen I says, "A piece to eat,
 Butter bread wiv sudar on it."

She yust kisses me as nice,
An' she cuts me a big slice,
 Butters it, an' nen
Spreads the sudar on so thick,
When I'm fru I have to lick
 It from off my chin.

Tom don't fink dat it is dood—
He won't eat it, never would,
 An' he says dod don it!
W'en cook dives him some, you see,
But the fing 'at's good for me
 'S butter bread wiv sudar on it!

MAMMA'S LITTLE COOK

I am my mamma's 'ittle cook.
I take my doll, an' pastry-book,

An' go out in the yard, an' bake
Some custard pies, an' angel-cake.

I pat them out, an' turn them round,
An' nen I lay them on the ground,

An' nen I set them in the sun,
An' bake them till they're hard and done.

But w'en I take them in my han'
I do not eat them, for they're san'.

I set the table right away,
My dollie eats them, in her play.

I make believe we're grown, an' she
'S a lady, come to visit me.

of Rural Folks

Nen after we set down, why, I
Say, "Won't you have a piece of pie?"

"I have yust baked it, an' it's hot,
An' awful dood, as like as not,"

An' I yust play till mamma's 'fraid
I 'ave runned off somew'ere, an' stayed.

'Ell nen she comes outdoors to look,
An' says, "Why, here's my 'ittle cook!"



CHOOSING A VOCATION

The boys at school all talk about
The things they're goin' t' be,
But why they choose such crazy things,
I can't exactly see.

There's Bobbie Burns will keep a shop,
And little Willie Dent
Is goin' t' be a grocery man,
And Jack a President.

Why don't they choose the same as me,
If they would win renown,
And do the thing that's really great!
And be a circus clown!

I think a feller 'd win more fame,
And be enjoyed lots more,
Than if he was a President,
Or kep' a grocery store.

of Rural Folks

He'd get to be there every day,
And see the sights, and all,
And get to do the best himself,
For he'd be "Billie of the Ball!"

There's lots of things to think about—
There is the great applause he gets,
For riding in the monkey cart,
And turnin' double somersets.

And there's another thing, I think,
Is surely worth a feller's while,
It is the clothes he gets to wear—
For every one admires his style.

It is the strangest thing to me,
When people go a-looking roun'
For things that are the best to be,
They will omit, the circus clown.

LITTLE PITCHERS HAVE BIG EARS

What is the meaning of the words,
That "little pitchers have big ears"?
Our little pitcher don't, I'm sure,
My mamma's had it years, and years.

I've got the tiniest of my own,
'At Santa brought with my new set,
An' I have looked it fru and fru,
But it hain't got big ears, you bet!

It seems the time they say it most
Is just when I am sitting by,
An' listen to the things they say,
An' try to understand them, why.

Last night my mamma and Aunt Rose
Was talking 'bout Aunt Hattie's beau,
How mean he always treated her,
An' turned her down, a time or so.

of Rural Folks

My mamma said it served her right
For goin' with "that Jimmy Spears!"
Then lookin' up as quick, she said,
"But little pitchers have big ears!"

I think I know what I will do,
I'm goin' to use it Sunday next,
When I stand up in Sunday-school,
An' have to say a Scripture text.

It's in the Bible, like as not,
An' I am sure when teacher hears,
She will explain just what it means,
That "little pitchers have big ears."



UNCLE NED

You bet I like my Uncle Ned!
He says boys oughtn't go t' bed
 Until their parents do.
He lets me stay up late at night,
And shows me how to box and fight,
 And gets me candy too.

He bought me my new roller skates,
So I could skate like Artie Bates,
 An' Ebenezer Hawk,
And didn't scold me just because,
Once when she kind a had to pause,
 I knocked a lady off the walk.

Onct when my mom had gone upstairs,
And told me quick to say my prayers,
 And follow, sure enough!
My Uncle Ned took out his pipe
And said to me, "Come here, you snipe!
 I'll let you take a puff."

of Rural Folks

Why, onct he took me to the zoo,
And to the park, and circus too,
 And to a rooster fight.
He give me all the things that's swell
To eat that day, but don't you tell,
 For I was sick that night!

My Uncle Ned's in politics,
And he has taught me lots of tricks.
 He says it's quite the thing,
When he won't be a Busse boy,
For me to always wallop Roy,
 And knock him out the ring!

If all the world was Uncle Ned's,
They wouldn't hardly need no beds,
 And everything you done
Would be just like a dandy dream,
And boys could eat six bricks of cream,
 O, wouldn't it be fun!

THE MONEY KING AND COON

Two small urchins of the street
Sat upon a curbstone brown,
Through a crevice in the walk
Each one looked intently down.

One boy's face was white and fair,
And the other's face was black,
But their interests were the same
Toward the nickel in the crack.

Looking up, the black one said,
With a sigh, compressed and long,
"W'en we gits dis nickel out,
Which one will it to belong?"

"Me, uv course," the answer came,
"You're a nigger, can't you see?
I'm the money king, an' you
Are the coon what works for me."

"You done tole de bigges' lie,"
He replied, with a vicious frown,
"White yaps hain't commopolized
All d' cullud folks in town.

"Once already I been told,
Foah you done come heah to me,
Not to mix wid no white trash,
Foh youse ain't good companee."

"Cops a-comin'!" gasped the white,
Springing to his feet in dread,
And the money king and coon
Down the nearest alley fled.



THANKSGIVING AT UNCLE JAKE'S

Thanksgivin' Day has come agin,
An' gee! you bet I'm glad.
'Twas only last 'Thanksgivin' Day
The mostest fun I had,

With little Bess, the girl what lives
Right there across the way.
Her folks is pore an' never have
No glad 'Thanksgivin' Day.

But I got smart and thought I'd ask
If they was bakin' yet,
An' if they'd killed their turkey, an'
I never shall forget

The way she turned her head away
And hid her face an' cried,
An' said she guessed they'd not had none,
Not since her mamma died.

of Rural Folks

Well, say, you bet I felt ashamed
Of what I'd said, an' sakes!
I up and asked if she would go
With us to Uncle Jake's.

You bet I's glad I did it too,
For, say, the eyes of Bess
Grew round an' glowed like blown out stars,
Would she? Well, I'd guess yes.

An' my! the things we done that day,
Out to my Uncle Jake's,
The turkey an' the apple sauce,
An' whoop! the pies and cakes.

My mouth is waterin' fer 'em yet,
The things we et, and whew!
Besides the other things we done,
We killed a punkin too!

An' made a punkin-jack and set
It on the barnyard gate,
An' got behind the post till Jack,
The colored boy, went by—as late,

Rag Weed Rhymes

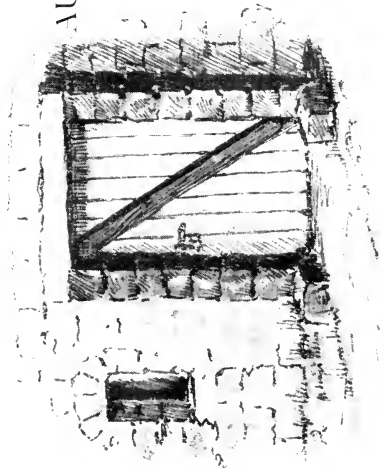
An' then I growled an' made a noise,
An' Jack he flung his hat,
An' held up both his hands like this,
An' said, "Now, w'at wus dat?"

Well, when he saw the punkin-jack,
You ought to seen him fly;
It ain't no snide, we like to died
A-laughin', Bess and I.

When I grow up, I'll marry her,
The girl across the way,
An' then I guess 'at me an' Bess
Will have Thanksgiving every day.







NAUGHT can stay the hand of
time,

All that is must pass away;
Even towering piles of stone
Have to crumble and decay.

LITTLE DOTTIE DIMPLE

Little Dottie Dimple,
Only two years old.
She has such a simple,
Little heart of gold!

She is just the sweetest,
Darling little girl.
Hasn't she the dearest,
Cutest little curl?

She has eyes of violet,
Tresses like the sun,
And her face is always
Brimming o'er with fun.

Wouldn't it be jolly,
If each little tot
Always was as happy
As our baby Dot?

UNCLE SILAS ON EVOLUTION

Th' fever fer a family tree
Got spread in 'Possum Trot,
The whole blame town wus full uv germs
Of all sich tommy-rot.

Says I to mother, "'Pears to me
This town will all go mad"—
When Mandy got the fever,
An' you bet she had it bad!

She ranted in her dreams each night
About the "family tree,"
Sometimes she'd rave out suddenlike,
"O, see my ancestree!"

She resurrected Thomas Brown,
A good old pioneer,
An' took his body fer the trunk,
Tho' dead this many a year.

of Rural Folks

She hed crusaders fer the limbs,
The twigs wus lords and knights,
What rid abroad in coat of mail,
An' butted into fights.

But when she reached a p'int where she
Wus willin' quite to stop—
She couldn't find none good enough
To put up in the top.

She searched the attic thru and thru
Fer proof uv family stock,
An' even pried into the works
Of grandad's eight-day clock.

But Mandy never talks no more
About the "family tree,"
Fer Mandy's been t' college
An' she's got a new idee.

An' when it comes to downright rot
About the parent seed,
That "evolution theory"
Is bound to take the lead.

Rag Weed Rhymes

She prates about the "Cambrian main"
An' "pre-existin' germs,"
An' 'lows as how it's possible
We all have come from worms.

If Mandy ever in her life
Has seed her old dad spunky,
It's when she said 'at mortal man
Is "similar to monkey."

I got so all-fired mad I felt
I'd like to go somewhere
An' pop my fist and jist say things,
I almost had to swear.

I hain't larned Mandy to no sich,
I've allus loved the Lord,
An' been a staid, God-fearin' man,
Abidin' in His word.

An' when the keers uv life is o'er,
I hope, O Lord, you'll see,
That "evolution theory"
Has got no holt on me.

GRAN'MA'S PET

Gran'ma Perkins said 'at I
Wus th' best 'at ever growed,
Never wus a sweeter chile
Ever lived, an' she jest knowed.

Once Aunt Lize an' her kids come,
'Ell that hateful Tommy T.
All the time 'at she wus there
Jest kep' on tormentin' me.

That time when we had a fight,
An' I but him once a whack!
Gran'ma said she wus jis glad
Tom did fall and hurt his back.

'Twas his fault—fer jist es soon
As I saw that apple shine—
Long time 'fore it hit th' ground,
I jest yelled right out, "It's mine!"

Rag Weed Rhymes

Ever'one of Gran'ma's girls,
What's got children uv their own
'S always packin' clash bout me,
Never can let me alone.

But most allus Gran'ma says,
"Well, it's mighty strange to me,
Fer when no one ain't around,
Pearlie's good as she can be!"

Once Tom took some peach preserves,
Down off of the pantry shelf,
'Ell he just begin to cram,
Course I et a few myself.

When he had 'em all et up,
An' was goin' to hide the jar,
Granma's standin' in the door,
And she said, 'W'y, here they are."

Then she saw th' jar and screamed,
"Mercy me, my peaches too,"
Then she grabbed ole mister Tom,
An' he got a shake or two.

of Rural Folks

'Ell that pesky Tommy T.,
He was gone as quick es that!
He can't run no faster 'n me—
An' he put it in his hat,

Right up on th' top 'f his head,
An' he yelled out, "Now, Miss It,
"Come and knock this apple off,
If ye think ye've got the grit."

I took after him an' he
Run down to the fence an' back,
Then out thru the barn-yard gate,
An' climb on the ole straw stack.

I wus chasin' right 't his heels,
An' I give 'im a big push,
Gee, you ought 'a' seen him slide,
Right down in a sticker bush.

Aunt Lize heard him scream an' run;
Saw the blood all over his chin;
Then she said she'd "skin me alive,"
If I ever done 't again.

Rag Weed Rhymes

Then she took me by th' hand,
Said, "Come here, you precious pet,
That there rascal of a Tom
Make my baby naughty yet!"

Gran'ma's saved me lots o' licks,
But it ain't no fun, you bet!
T' have 'em all a-pickin' 't you
'Cause you are your gran'ma's pet.



TEETERIN' ON A RAIL

Y' ever teeter on a rail?
I have, me and Bennie Nail,
Had a teeter-totter board
On a stump by Miller's ford.

Used to teeter half th' day,
Ruther do it lots than play,
An' when fruit was gittin' ripe,
Only way 'at we could swipe.

Some from Daddy Durnell's row
'F budded peaches, wus to go
With our rail, an' 'gin to ride
Over on the peaches' side.

We could teeter up an' reach,
Now and then, a purty peach;
Wouldn't done it, Ben an' me,
But dad's stingy as could be.

Rag Weed Rhymes

Heart as hard as any flint,
Sell his hide to make a cent,
Onct he's chasin' Grimes's hen
Frum his cabbage patch, an' when,

Happen' to spy ole Ben an' me,
Ridin' by his bigges' tree,
Shook his fist at us an' said,
"Wish 'at you two pests wus dead!

"Hain't you youngens got no sense,
Tryin' to teeter on my fence?"
Shook his ole cane at us too;
We jumped down, an' sakes! we flew.

Hadn't got so far away,
We looked back at him, an' say,
He wus settin' on our rail,
Eatin' peaches frum a pail.

"Come," I said, "we'll have some fun!"
Then we started on the run.
Dad can't hear, an' don't suppose
See ten inches 'fore his nose.

of Rural Folks

Won't weigh more 'an sixty pound,
Me an' Ben we just slipped 'round,
An' jumped on other end of th' rail,
Gee! we made ole daddy sail!

Made him go up in the air,
Then he just begin to swear.
Jest kept teeterin' up an' down,
Ever' time he'd hit the ground,

Try to scramble off, but we
'D take him up agin, you see.
Gad! we had him on the wing,
W'en we both began to sing—

"Teeter-totter, Daddy D.
Hain't got no more sense than we;
Daddy D. hain't got no sense,
Tryin' to teeter on our fence!"

ART

Two children stood one evening,
As the sun was going down,
And told each other what they'd like to be.
The boy had hair of yellow,
But the girl had tresses brown,
And both of them were beautiful to see.

"W'en I drow up, I fink I'll do
Away atross the sea,
W'ere no one but de fairies is allowed,
An' 'ey will dive me wainbow paint,"
Exclaimed the tot of three,
"An' I tan w'ite a picture of a thoud."

"O, that is nothin'," said the boy,
"I do not fancy such,
They're udly, an' 'ey do not sail so high.
W'en I drow up I fink the fink
I'd like to do so much
Would be to paint a picture of the sky!"

of Rural Folks

The years had flown, two artists stood
Within the hall of fame—
A charming lady and a handsome man.
The man approached the lady,
Tho' he did not know her name,
And said, "I wish you'd tell me, if you can,

"The reason why my picture
Does not satisfy me quite,
Tho' I can see the color pleased the crowd."
Why, yes," she said, "your sky is high—
I think you'd make it right
If you could break the distance with a cloud!

"But I have painted also, sir,
What does my picture need?
It don't entirely satisfy my eye."
"I think, my dear young lady,
Since your cloud hangs low indeed,
That it would stand a little more of sky."

And then they both remembered,
As the sun was going down,
Two children told each other what they'd be,
For the man had hair of yellow,
And the lady tresses brown,
And both of them were beautiful to see.

A LITTLE LAD FLYING A KITE

A little lad with tangled curls,
And eyes of heaven's blue,
Ran down a dusty lane one day,
When not a zephyr blew.

Within his chubby hand he held
A slender cord of white,
While far behind him in the dust
There trailed a paper kite.

Time after time, he flung the kite,
But after circling 'round,
It, winding in a zigzag way,
Fell idly to the ground.

His arm grew tired, the sun was hot,
Beyond him laughed the brook,
And yet—I saw upon his face
A more determined look.

of Rural Folks

Once more with skill he threw his kite,
And ere he was aware,
A soft south breeze swept o'er the land,
The leaves were rustling everywhere.

The kite leapt out, with one long bound,
Uncertain—if it dare,
It quivered—but by breezes buoyed,
Shot onward thru the air.

And on, and on, and on, it soared,
Where air is rare it flew,
Until it looked a tiny speck,
Beneath the arch of blue.

So then I thought how, in this life,
The failures all around
Have given idly up when first
Their kite fell on the ground.

But they who've won success in life,
Are persevering men,
Who've wrestled in the noonday sun,
To soar their kites, beyond our ken.

RAGS

Rags was only an outcast dog,
 Dirty and lame when he came to me,
Chased by an ever growing throng
 Of cruel boys, whom he sought to flee.

Pelted with stones at every turn,
 Dragging a foot through the drifted snow,
Crying with pain he fell at my feet,
 In his small eyes a world of woe.

I saw on the snow a crimson trail,
 And heard the jeers of the rabid mob,
And I was touched when I felt the heart
 Of the hunted cur begin to throb.

I picked him up with a tender care,
 And bore him away to my own retreat,
Away from the city's noise and din,
 To a cozy home, in a quiet street.

of Rural Folks

I bandaged the broken, bleeding limb,
The starving creature, warmed, and fed.
He was only a dog, and could not speak,
But "a thousand thanks" the two eyes said.

The years have flown, he's grown to be
A happy dog, with a happy air.
He guards my house, and he guards my yard,
Like the watchman, who says to the stranger
"Beware!

"For he who enters my master's gate
Must bear the passport of his consent,
But he who passes ruthlessly in
Through me, his entering shall repent."

It was many a day ere Rags forgot
The kicks, and cuffs of the passing throng,
And never a screech from a newsy's throat,
Or the squeaky note of a parrot's song,

But he flew to me with a piteous whine,
And begging, crouched in fear at my feet,
As he had, the day I rescued him,
From an angry mob in a busy street.

Rag Weed Rhymes

I am not sorry I saved his life,
As over again the years I scan.
I know that a dog is only a dog,
But I think that a *man* should be a *man*!

THE END





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